



HIV COUNSELING AND TESTING PROGRAM

What we do:

The California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS (CDHS/OA) established the HIV Counseling and Testing (C&T) Program as an HIV prevention intervention that integrates prevention counseling with HIV testing. C&T services are provided by 59 local health jurisdictions (LHJs) and their subcontractors at both anonymous and confidential HIV C&T sites in California. C&T sites have been established in public health clinics throughout California. In anonymous test sites, clients must give informed consent verbally. In confidential test sites, clients must sign a written authorization prior to the test.

Who is eligible:

HIV C&T services are available to all individuals who may have engaged in behavior that places them at risk for contracting HIV. High-risk behavior includes any activity involving the exchange of bodily fluids. The C&T Program serves the following populations deemed to be at high risk for HIV transmission:

- Men who have sex with men (MSM);
- Females who have sex with MSM;
- Injection drug users; and
- Sex industry workers.

What we have done:

Many agencies throughout California have implemented rapid HIV testing. Rapid HIV testing has advantages for HIV prevention activities because a rapid test result is available within 20 to 40 minutes and the technology gives HIV counselors an unprecedented opportunity to engage clients within a single session. Virtually everyone who is tested using this technology receives their test results, including confirmatory results for preliminary positive tests. CDHS/OA has worked with C&T sites to provide the necessary training to implement rapid HIV testing effectively.

What you should know:

- Annually, approximately 180,000 HIV tests are provided statewide through the HIV C&T Program.
- Prior to rapid HIV testing, one-quarter to one-third of clients did not return for their test results.
- Currently 40 of 61 LHJs have been trained to offer rapid HIV tests.
- It is predicted that by the end of 2007, approximately 90 percent of current volume testing will be conducted by rapid HIV testing.



Helpful resources:

- For information on a C&T site near you or other local HIV/AIDS services, see the *California AIDS Clearinghouse Resource Directory* at Website <http://www.hivinfo.org/links/lhj.htm>.
- For information about HIV/AIDS, call the:
 - *California AIDS Hotline* at (800) 367-AIDS (English/Spanish/Filipino) or (888) 225-AIDS (TDD).
 - *National AIDS Hotline* at (800) 342-AIDS (English), (800) 344-SIDA (Spanish), or (800) 243-7889 (TDD).
- For information on OA's mission, programs, and other helpful resources, see Website <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/AIDS>.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website <http://www.cdc.gov/HIV>.

